



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Events in Kyrgyzstan and Defining OSCE's Role

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Paul W. Jones
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 7, 2005

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

We are indeed grateful for the Chairmanship's report on the situation in Kyrgyzstan and for its recommendations on how to establish a key OSCE role in that country's development.

The United States has closely monitored the dramatic events unfolding in Kyrgyzstan over the last two weeks. We welcome President Akayev's decision to tender his resignation and the decision of the Kyrgyz Parliament to hold Presidential elections in June and to ensure that Kyrgyzstan's parliament reflects the choice of the Kyrgyz people.

As the interim government works to stabilize the country and prepare the nation for elections, we call on all elected leaders and political forces to engage in thoughtful dialogue on the way forward. At this crucial moment, it is important that all sides refrain from actions that might increase tensions and threaten the fragile stability now in place.

The task before the Kyrgyz people, that of laying the foundations for a democratic society based on rule of law, respect for human rights and the citizens' right to freely choose their leaders, is a daunting one. But it is the only path to long-term peace and prosperity; and not one that the Kyrgyz need embark on alone.

Recognizing the stakes involved for Kyrgyzstan as it works to establish stability, the international community is already mobilizing itself to help. The United States is convinced that the OSCE, with its comprehensive security framework and field mission presence, backed by the resources and commitment of 55 participating States, is ideally suited to coordinate and lead this effort.

We strongly endorse the CiO's pledge of full OSCE support for Kyrgyzstan and applaud his ongoing efforts, as well as those of the Personal Representative of the CiO for Central Asia, Ambassador Peterle, to mediate among Kyrgyzstan's various political stakeholders. We appreciate also the helpful efforts of Secretary General Jan Kubis during his recent fact-finding trip. Finally, we support Ambassador Peterle's current visit to Kyrgyzstan, and urge the Chairmanship to maintain an energetic and continuous presence in the country.

We encourage the Chairmanship to play a pro-active role in coordinating and prioritizing all of the OSCE's means of supporting the Kyrgyz people at this critical moment in their democratic transition, and in their efforts to deepen stability.

We thank Ambassador Mueller and his team at the OSCE Center in Bishkek for their efforts in support of Kyrgyzstan's democracy -- we here in Vienna need to do all we can to make sure they have the encouragement and resources they need to meet the challenges ahead.

We share the assessment that areas of primary focus should include security assistance, election and parliamentary support, economic advisory assistance, civil society development, strengthening the rule of law, freedom of the media, and ethnic minority issues.

The United States stands ready to do its part to support the Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat and our Center in Bishkek to carry out the above priorities in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kyrgyzstan.

Events in Kyrgyzstan present our organization with a unique challenge and a historic opportunity to work together with the international community and neighboring countries in Central Asia to help the Kyrgyz people secure for themselves a democratic future founded on sustainable economic development. It is the very kind of undertaking for which the OSCE was originally conceived.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.